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Praise for 'JFK' Leaves Critic Without a Job

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Washington

Film critic Pat Dowell never wrote a review her editors wouldn't run until she gave 3½ stars to "JFK."

She's now the ex-critic of Washingtonian magazine, resigning after editor Jack Limpert spiked her words of praise for Oliver Stone's controversial movie.

"The idea that the president, the Pentagon and the CIA are all acting in concert" to assassinate John Kennedy and cover it up "is bizarre, just crackpot, preposterous," Limpert said yesterday.

His view after seeing the film: "the dumbest movie about Washington ever made."

Dowell's unpublished critique called it "a brilliantly crafted indictment of history as an official story."

Limpert said her review suffered from "bad writing."

Dowell said Limpert suffered from caring too much about how he's viewed by the Washington establishment.

"I'd say that you overreacted in censoring my column to save the magazine and presumably yourself from being mistaken for admirers of 'JFK,'" she said in a letter to Limpert.

Limpert denied it, saying that conspiracy is legitimate food for thought, but that "JFK" carries the message too far.

"A lot of people don't believe the Warren Commission, a lot of people think (Lee Harvey) Oswald didn't act alone," he said.

When Limpert sent her a note saying he'd pulled the review from the February issue of the Washingtonian, Dowell made him an offer.

She wouldn't resign in protest, she said, if he ran her review in the March issue.

"I didn't really expect him to take me up on it," she said yesterday.